THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) It appears that no issue of the Business Standard was published in New Delhi on 28th January, 2001.

(b) On account of geographical position, climate and geological setting, India is prone to various natural disasters like cyclone, flood, earthquake, drought. There is hardly a year when some part of the country or other does not face one disaster or combination of disasters.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) As per the policy of the Government of India with regard to external assistance for relief in the wake of natural disasters, no formal appeal on behalf of the Government either directly or through any other agency to attract relief is made. However, relief donated on a voluntary basis is accepted and acknowledged as a sign of international solidarity.

Projects of SFAC

3533. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allocated to projects taken up by SFAC during the last three years and achievements made by it, with special reference to the NER, State-wise;

(b) whether any State level SFACs have been formed;

(c) if so, their structure and scope and the number of such State level SFACs; and

(d) the budgetary allotment to SFAC, with break-up, in regard to each State level SFAC, the amount allocated during 2000-2001, 2001-2002 and that proposed under the Tenth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) During the last three years, a grant-in-aid amounting to Rs. 7.50 crore has been released to the Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC), under the Central Sector Scheme 'Setting up of Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium'. Out of the said Rs. 7.50 crore grant-in-aid released to the SFAC, Rs. 0.80 crore was earmarked for the North Eastern States of the country, including Sikkim. However, against that allocation, a grants-in-aid amounting to Rs. 4.00 crore has already been released to the 8 North Eastern States including Sikkim. during the Ninth Plan, for the creation of corpus for the respective State level

SFACs. SFAC Society is a promotional body, and is a Financial Institution involved in the promotion and facilitation of projects as a Venture Capital Fund and it does not undertake the execution of any projects on its own. It has, however, assisted a number of projects in the North Eastern Region.

(b) and (c) During the Ninth Five Year Plan, so far, State level SFACs have been formed in the 11 States namely, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Tirpura, Sikkim, Meghalya, Manipur, Himachal Pradesh and Uttranchal. The State level SFACs in other 5 States *viz.* Assam, Nagaland, Bihar, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are in the process of formation. The State Governments had been requested to promote counter part State level SFAC Societies outside the Governmental structure so that assistance from Central SFAC to the projects promoted in the States could be routed through them.

(d) A budgetary provision of Rs. 5.00 crore had been made for the SFAC during the year 2000-01, which was, however, brought down to Rs. 4.50 crore, which included Rs. 0.50 crore for the North Eastern States, at the Revised Estimates stage. For the year 2001-2002, a budgetary provision of Rs. 5.00 crore has been made for the SFAC. Out of this provision, Rs. 0.50 crore has been earmarked for the North Eastern States. Under the Scheme 'Setting up of Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium', grants-in-aid is not released to the SFAC State-wise. No budgetary provision has been made under the Scheme 'Setting up of Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium' as no financial assistance to SFACs has been envisaged during the Tenth Five Year Plan.

National pulse development project in Orissa

3534. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allocated to Orissa under Centrally sponsored National Pulses Development Project during each of the last three years;

(b) the achievement made in that State under the above programme during each of the last three years; and

(c) the details of coverage made under the programme in that State, so far?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) The amount allocated and released to Orissa State under the Centrally